

# **EXHIBIT 2.**

[cooper.edu](https://cooper.edu)

# Message from President Sparks on Student Protest

6–7 minutes

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**Update, October 31:** [Read here](#) a message to alumni from President Sparks and Cooper Union Alumni Association President Ron Vogel.

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## **President Sparks message to the Cooper Community on October 25:**

Over the past few weeks, events affecting our community both near and far have created significant fear, unease, and unrest, and today, with the student protest on campus, the discord reached a new and unacceptable level at Cooper. While we will have more to say about this in the coming days, we felt it was important to communicate with everyone tonight. We want everyone to be aware of the security measures in place on campus and to share the events that took place on Wednesday, particularly as there is erroneous and conflicting information circulating.

To start, we want to be very clear that while there is an important role for peaceful protest, there is no place at Cooper Union for activities that disrupt students' ability to learn, faculty's ability to teach, or anyone's sense of safety and security on our campus. This is a place of shared learning, and we must hold that

commitment and the ability for all students, faculty, and staff to feel safe on our campus. There is no place at Cooper for hateful and violent language or actions. These violate our commitment to creating an open, respectful, inclusive community. Protests must respect time, place, and manner conditions so we can uphold our commitment to make all in our community feel safe and welcome.

On Wednesday, there was a planned student walk-out outside of the Foundation Building, part of a larger effort across New York City and nationally. Students convened in front of the Foundation Building at 1 p.m.; it was a peaceful protest. However, we want to make clear that language displayed on the protest signs may have suggested that the students were speaking on behalf of the college – they were not. The signs carried and posted on the sidewalk in front of the building represented the views of those who created them.

At approximately 2 p.m., during the protest, a fire alarm on the 5th floor of the Foundation Building went off indicating there was smoke present. We evacuated the building, and FDNY arrived on site. FDNY confirmed there was no evidence of smoke, and people were allowed to return to the building. We are investigating the circumstances around the fire alarm. After we were able to return to the building, the protest moved inside the building around 3:45 p.m. To maintain a safe space, the library was closed for approximately 20 minutes while some student protestors moved through the building, some chanting protest slogans and banging on the library doors and windows. Some students, not at all involved in the protest who were in the library, and some who entered during the protest remained there during this time. They were accompanied by library staff and chose to stay in the library

until the protest was over. All students, including those who participated in the protest, dispersed by 5:30 p.m.

Cooper Union's security team was in communication with NYPD throughout the day and evening, and NYPD was present on campus this afternoon and remained on campus after participants dispersed. On Wednesday evening, our team did a full debrief with the NYPD. For additional support for all, on Thursday we will have an expanded security presence on campus as we go about our classes and work. If you have any concerns about attending class, please reach out to your deans.

At Cooper Union, all students are subject to a [Code of Conduct](#) that defines expectations, rights, and responsibilities. We take the Code of Conduct very seriously. Students are expected to abide by it, and we will continue to enforce it. In the coming days we will review reports and footage from today's events and initiate any necessary actions consistent with our policies. We remind our community that student records, including disciplinary actions and proceedings, are confidential.

At the top of the code's Student Rights is the freedom to engage in free discussion, inquiry, and expression. Also included in the Student Rights is freedom from discrimination and harassment. We respect the rights of people to have their own views and expect that we make no assumptions about what an individual's views may be based on religious, social, or political identities. There is room for productive debate and dissent here, but there is no tolerance for hate or threatening conduct. We condemn discrimination of any kind, including antisemitism and Islamophobia. We condemn hateful and threatening acts of any kind – written, spoken, visual, or physical.

If you have any security concerns, please contact the following or 911 at any time, 24/7:

- 41 Cooper Square Security 212.353.4170
- Foundation Building Security 7 East 7th Street 212.353.4180
- Residence Hall Security (29 Third Ave.) 212.353.4050

And please access the services and resources to support student care and wellbeing via this [information](#) from Student Affairs, which includes onsite and off-site [counseling services](#), [crisis care services](#), and [medical care](#), including 24/7 [TimelyCare](#). Student Affairs will continue to provide regular updates on Student Care and Support services.

The devastation and loss of life in Israel and Gaza are tragic and the cause of deep pain and anger for people around the world and in our own community. The situation evokes disparate, deep emotions, strong views, and conflicting positions. But that does not excuse or condone disruptive, hateful, or threatening conduct. In the coming week, we will be outlining a series of ways to help us process these global events. Regardless of our differences, we must respect and not threaten or discriminate against one another. We must remain committed to our work as a community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Laura